

March 29, 1968

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION
THIS DATE WITH ABRAHAM BOLDEN

Also Present: John Hosmer, Springfield, Missouri, private attorney
for Abraham Bolden, federal prisoner, former Secret Service
Agent.

Time and Place: 2:45 - 3:30 p.m., March 29, 1968, Federal
Prison, Springfield, Missouri.

Hosmer explained to Bolden that I had received his various
letters to _____ and was desirous of asking certain
questions about (1) the manner in which the prosecution of his case
had taken place and (2) whether there was some extraneous reason for
his prosecution and imprisonment.

There was a discussion of Bolden's background, his Secret Service
duties, his arrest, indictment, conviction, and incarceration.

Among other things, Bolden expressed several times that he
thought his wife was in danger. He also said that his wife and
family were under either harassment or threat. (For example, see
arson).

Bolden outlined the various errors which he alleged had been
committed in his arrest, conviction, et. al.

The only question which he could not answer was "Why he was sent
to Washington (from Chicago) on May 17th". Although pressed several
times, he could not answer this.

Bolden expressed firmly, cautiously, but repeatedly that his "troubles" were directly and exclusively connected with his expressed thoughts as to the failures of the Secret Service re both Presidential protection in general and the Kennedy assassination in particular.

The following (in half quotes is a paraphrase of his beliefs in his involvement (rearranged in chronological order):

'In October, 1963, JFK was due to come to Chicago for the Army-Navy football game at Soldiers Field. However, prior (when?) to the scheduled visit, Agent-in-Charge (Chicago) Martineau received a personal call from Chief Rowley, head of whole Secret Service, in Washington.

'Rowley told Martineau that the S.S. had word of an assassination plot which was supposed to take place during JFK's coming visit to Chicago. According to Rowley, four men had come or would come to Chicago to participate.

'Martineau called in all men in his charge in Chicago and told them of Rowley's call. He also informed them the following as to this matter: 1) there were to be no written reports; any information was to be given to Martineau orally 2) Nothing was to be sent by TWX; he (Martineau) was to report only by phone to Rowley, personally; 3) no file number was to be given to this case.

'All S.S. agents in Chicago (including Bolden) were shown four photos of the men allegedly involved in the plot. (of the four, Bolden remembers two names: Bradley and Gonzalez).

(He recalls "Bradley" by some prior association; he believes his first name was Edward or Edgar but he is far from sure as to first name at all. He remembers "Gonzalez" by the fact that agent Robert J. Motto asked him how to spell Gonzalez")

'Shortly before the scheduled JFK visit, Martineau assembled his agents to discuss the results of their investigation; the only ones excluded were the two Negroes, Bolden and his partner, Conrad Cross; Bolden asked "why" he had been excluded from the investigation and the meeting and was told that the whole investigation was "northside" and Negroes would be conspicuous; he believes that this is a valid, unsuspicious explanation.

'The meeting in Martineau's office was attended by the following agents:

JAMES GRIFFITHS
JOSEPH NOONAN
ROBERT J. MOTO
THOMAS D. STRONG
J. LLOYD STOCKS
STEVEN B. MAYNARD
(maybe others)

'The agents appear to have reported that the plot was genuine, as result of their surveillance. The four men appear to have come to Chicago and were staying with a 'landlady (unidentified to B.F.) on the north side. This meeting probably took place November 1, 1963

'The Kennedy visit was called off with some extraneous (to the plot) reason given. However, Bolden has given out the 'story' within the last year.

* * * * *

'Immediately after the assassination, the S.S. in Chicago (as nationwide) did nothing except work on the assassination problem. Bolden was involved after November 22nd as follows:

'On the night of November 23rd (Bolden is not positive as to the time) he received a call at home from a S.S. agent in Dallas who wanted "instant information" on the following two items: 1) Klein's sporting

goods and the Oswald rifle 2) Whether Oswald received money from Chicago, as alleged in a Chicago American article of that day.

'Bolden gave both assignments to Agent James Griffiths.

'Griffiths went to Kleins and was told that he (Klein) had been 'ordered' by the FBI not to discuss the matter with anyone. Zilch.

'Griffiths went to the Chicago American writer who, also, wouldn't talk with him. Zilch. (Report on this should be in the National Archives).

* * * * *

'On November 24, 1963, Martineau called Bolden and asked him if he had ever heard of a JOHN HEARD. Bolden believes Martineau asked him because he (Bolden) had "worked a case" against a JIMMY HEARD, a counterfeiter. When Bolden said "no", he didn't know a John Heard, Martineau asked if "Jimmy Heard" were colored or white. When told "colored", Martineau asked Bolden to "pull" all cards marked "HEARD". Bolden said there were approximately 100 "Heards" (Query). Anyway, Bolden gave Martineau all "Heard" cards; believe it was definitely connected with assassination investigation, as this was all "they" were doing. Bolden also believes S.S. arrested a JOHN HEARD at this time; doesn't know.

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'After Dallas, an Inspector Kelley (who came from Dallas) and MARTINEAU personally visited the northside "landlady" with whom the

four suspects stayed in October. Interviewed her. Bolden has no idea of the results, if any. Has the address stashed away somewhere; couldn't or wouldn't recall at the time of this conversation either her name or address, if he knew either.

* * * * *

'Shortly after the assassination, Martineau called all agents into his office and showed them a memo (letter? Order? Reg.?) from Washington to the effect that the S.S. was to discuss no aspect of the assassination and investigation with anyone from any other federal agency now or any time in the future. Every agent, including Bolden was made to initial this memo. Bolden believes this took place on Wednesday, November 27th. When asked why; 'FDI wanted to get role of Presidential Protector away from S.S. and thought this was ideal opportunity due to ^{lack of} laxness of S.S.'

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'Normally S.S. I.D. cards reissued or revalidated only when agents go to Washington; they normally identify each other in public by lapel pins. However, very soon after Dallas, all I.D. cards of Chicago agents had to be turned in in Chicago and new ones issued; normally "never out of agents possession." This would appear to be a check to see if all agents had their cards. Had one lost theirs? Josiah Thompson says that someone in Dealy Plaza flashed a S.S. I.D. card; yet S.S.

says none of their agents could have done it. How did S.S. know a few days after Dealey what Thompson published in 1963? Was a card missing? Did S.S. think a card was missing?

* * * * *

'After these events and with his 'knowledge' of S.S. "laxity and insobriety", Bolden discussed the possibility of giving testimony in one form or another to the Warren Commission. He discussed this at length with his partner, Conrad Cross, during the spring of 1964. He believes Cross must have "ratted" on him and that S.S. knew of it when he left Chicago for Washington for S.S. School on May 17th.

'When Bolden arrived in Washington, he went to the White House and tried to phone J. Lee Rankin. Couldn't reach him. His "babysitter", Agent GARRY McCLOUD "dogged him" carefully. Also McCloud received a phone call at ²2:30 a.m. on the 18th at the hotel.

'Monday, May 18, 1964, the agents go to school. Shortly thereafter, Bolden and McCloud fly to Chicago.'